

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00
ICAE-00 INRE-00 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 EUR-12 ACDA-12
SAA-01 SSM-03 /119 W
-----017282 291054Z /21

O P 290950Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8965
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM
CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
COMSIXTHFLT
CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
DIA WASHDC
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 4301

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PINS, MILI, ASEC, LE
SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION: JULY 29, 1300 HOURS LOCAL

REF: BEIRUT 4285 (DTG 281255Z JUL 78)
1. CEASE-FIRE BROKEN. THE THREE-DAY CEASE-FIRE WAS BROKEN
EVENING OF JULY 28-29. AT ABOUT 1800 ON JULY 28 ARTILLERY
AND SMALL ARMS FIRE BROKE OUT IN AYN AR-RUMMANAH BETWEEN CHRISTIANS
AND SYRIANS, BUT RELATIVE CALM RETURNED AROUND 0100 HOURS ON JULY
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29. ACCORDING TO A WELL-PLACED SYRIAN SOURCE, TWO CIVILIANS WERE
KILLED. IKE SAID THE FIGHTING BEGAN AFTER SNIPERS KILLED A SYRIAN
SOLDIER. L'ORIENT-LE JOUR COMMENTED THAT DESPITE THE FIGHTING
THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND REMAINED CONSIDERABLY BETTER, "COMPARED
TO THE HELL EXPERIENCED BY HADATH AND PREVIOUSLY BY AYN
AR-RUMMANAH AND EAST BEIRUT".

2. ARMY TO SOUTH. ACCORDING TO L'ORIENT-LE JOUR, ONE BATTALION OF THE LEBANESE ARMY WILL DEPLOY SOUTH ON JULY 31. IKE QUOTED A "HIGHLY RELIABLE OFFICIAL SOURCE" AS SAYING ON JULY 28 THAT AGREEMENT HAD ALSO BEEN REACHED TO "SHELVE" SA'D HADDAD AND SAMI SHIDIAC. "THEY WILL REMAIN IN THE ARMY AND WILL CONTINUE TO CASH THEIR SALARIES, BUT THEY WILL HAVE NO JOB. IT IS A LEBANESE COMPROMISE," THE SOURCE REPORTEDLY SAID. FOREIGN MINISTER FOUAD BOUTROS TOLD THE PRESS THAT THERE WERE "DIFFICULTIES" INVOLVED IN THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE ARMY SOUTH, BUT NO "OBSTACLES."

3. REACTION TO US WARNING.

A. BOTH THE PRESS AND POLITICAL CIRCLES HAVE REACTED UNFAVORABLY TO THE EMBASSY ADVICE TO US CITIZENS TO LEAVE LEBANON IF THEY DO NOT HAVE PRESSING BUSINESS HERE (SEPTTEL). L'ORIENT-LE JOUR CARRIED BANNER HEADLINES SAYING "ANTI-US OUTCRY AND SHARP WORRY IN BEIRUT." IKE CARRIED BANNER HEADLINE SAYING "NO NEED TO PANIC." AN ADF COMMUNIQUE SAID THAT "THE INNER PARTS" OF AYN AR-RUMMANAH WERE THE ONLY AREA WHERE SECURITY INCIDENTS OCCURED, "DESPITE THE ANXIETY WHICH GRIPPED THE CAPITAL AS A RESULT OF CERTAIN NEWS REPORTS."

B. PIERRE GEMAYEL SAID THAT "WE ARE VERY ASTONISHED BY THE INSTRUCTIONS (SIC) GIVEN BY THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND THE UNITED STATES EMBASSY TO THEIR CONFIDENTIAL

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CITIZENS IN LEBANON, WHO ARE INVITED TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY, EXCEPT IN THE CASE OF URGENT BUSINESS." GEMAYEL ADDED THAT "THIS MEASURE CERTAINLY DOES NOT CONFORM TO THE ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES WHICH IS THE COUNTRY WHICH HAS EMPHASIZED THE MOST OFTEN ITS ATTACHMENT TO THE INDEPENDENCE OF LEBANON AND A WILLINGNESS TO AID LEBANON TO REESTABLISH ITS SECURITY, ITS AUTHORITY AND ITS SOVEREIGNTY." SHIA DEPUTY ADEL OSSEIRAN SAID THAT THE ANNOUNCEMENT PROVED CLEARLY THAT THE AMERICANS "WANT TO OPEN THE WAY" FOR ISRAEL TO OCCUPY THE SOUTH AND THAT "THE USA IS THUS WORKING FOR THE PARTITION OF LEBANON."

C. NO LEBANESE GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL HAS ISSUED PUBLIC STATEMENT ON THE MATTER, ALTHOUGH IKE QUOTED "A HIGH-RANKING LEBANESE GOVERNMENT SOURCE" AS SAYING THE AMERICANS HAD ISSUED THE STATEMENT BECAUSE THEY BELIEVED "THERE COULD BE FURTHER CLASHES." IKE SAID THE STATEMENT HAD "SENT A SHOCK WAVE THROUGH AN ALREADY NERVOUS LEBANON." PARKER

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